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SUBJECT: KUWAIT MEDIA REACTION - PROMISES, WOMEN, AND NEW FACES IN
THE PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS

Block Quotes

Friday, June 9, 2006

-- Lawyer and columnist Faisal Saleh Al-Sbaiei criticized in the moderate Arabic-language daily Al-Rai Al-Aam under the title "Electoral legacy" (6/9): "It really upsets me when I hear people calling those who have extensive experience in handling the responsibility of legislation 'the old guard,' saying that they have gotten old and so has their creativity. They also claim that we must force new blood into the veins of the legislature. In my opinion, this is a one-sided opinion and is only half of the truth. It is true that the legislative branch needs some new, educated faces with a history of leadership in society to give a positive image.... The need for both is a popular demand and a necessity for nationalism and democracy. With the leaders and the symbols the legislative branch will stand on two strong legs and citizens will feel secure that they are represented by strong people."

-- Sadiq Badr argued in the moderate Arabic-language daily Al-Watan under the title "We do not want slogans or promises" (6/9): "Wherever one turns while driving on the streets of Kuwait these days one sees hundreds of tents have been erected to serve as campaign headquarters for candidates for the National Assembly. One also finds thousands of billboards decorated and colorful all carrying attractive slogans as we are used to here in Kuwait.... One will hear all of these slogans at the openings of campaign headquarters. One will also hear them at the seminars held by the candidates who know how to tickle the emotions and feelings of voters. We do not want our feelings to be tickled or our emotions set ablaze. We want the future MPs to realize the slogans and translate the promises into tangible reality as our people have lost many promises that evaporated in the past."

-- Attorney-at-law and office manager of the Editor-in-Chief Bassel Merheb remarked in the pro-government Arabic-language daily Al-Seyassah under the title "Kuwaiti women: A losing or winning bet" (6/9): "The problem of most men is that they hide behind their fingers despite their knowing that they are mistaken in certain matters. The ideas that have been set in stone and have taken over their heads blind their vision to the truth, which is that a man without a woman is like life without air. Lift your hands off the women, let them breathe, as there are women who are 100 times better than men who say and do not do. Let it be known to the women that failure in this test is unacceptable as there are so many waiting for your failure."

-- Arwa Al-Waqyan observed in the progressive Arabic-language daily

Al-Qabas under the title "Why?" (6/9): "How funny it is to see those who stood against women's rights and did all that was in their power to abort our rights change their masks and now praise women. Not only that, some of them are using women in their campaigns and have set up tents especially for them. All of a sudden, the tone has changed from against to with.... Sadly, Mr. Candidate my conscience requires me to not vote for anyone who stood against my rights one day and vote for those who supported them. We, the women of Kuwait will not forget those who have stood against us and who stood with us. Your positions on 'we want it five' will not make us forget your shameful positions against women's rights. The right from which you had forbidden us for years and suddenly your main concern is reaching every woman after you learned that women are a majority in Kuwait Where was all that when we needed you?"

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